It was brutally cold when volunteers from Altar’d State started arriving for their first day on the construction site of the house they are sponsoring in Hope Haven. They wore heavy coats, hats, gloves and work boots, but mostly big warm smiles.

These folks came to build and they weren’t going to let the cold or the arctic breeze that came with it slow them down. Eagerness and energy would carry the day.

As each team member walked onto the site, they signed in and made one of those special name tags that only Habitat has—a 4” strip of gray duct tape with their first name in big black magic marker!

Tony Gibbons, Habitat’s executive director, welcomed everyone and made introductions, while most of us rocked from one foot to the other in an attempt to generate some heat in our extremities. Then our Project Managers, Mike Phillips and Jarred Rice, gave the safety clinic that is a must before each work day on a Habitat site.

Tony Servies from Altar’d State offered a prayer for a safe and fruitful morning and another Habitat build was underway.

Where Cold Weather Meets Warm Smiles

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It would be easy for this daily activity to look routine to the casual observer. But building a Habitat house is never routine.

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Honda Plant Manager, Ryan Murphy (left) and Jacob Wilson, another Honda manager, are seen here with Honda employee and future Habitat homeowner, Jason Brown. All three came to Hope Haven recently to work on the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection house.

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dose of love. Nothing is taken for
granted. Measurements are precise
and ears are constantly piqued so
that no instruction is missed or
misunderstood. Habitat houses
are built to last.

And, of course, we couldn’t even
get started with a build without
funding—for infrastructure and
building supplies. And, that’s where
“a little help from our friends”
comes in. Individuals, churches,
corporations, organizations and
foundations—all are supporters
and all make our building
program possible.

So we welcome Altar’d State to our
Habitat family in Loudon County
and thank them for being our
newest corporate partner. We are
excited about this new partnership
and look forward to getting to know
the Altar’d State team and working
with them on this house and
others to come.

Earlier this month, Loudon County
Habitat launched its 10th Women
Build house. In celebration of National
Women Build Week, women from
around the county, along with Lowe’s
dignitaries and their own volunteers,
Lowe’s Heroes, gathered to celebrate
the Women Build Program and Lowe’s
ongoing sponsorship.

The celebration also included the
1st Annual Women in Leadership
luncheon, recognizing the many
women throughout Loudon County
who hold leadership roles that contribute
to the health and well-being of everyone
in our community.

Loudon County Habitat built its first
all-women house in 2002. Sarah
Reynolds and her late husband, Richard, championed
the idea of a house built by all women. The two had
built their own home in Lenoir City, and both came to
the conclusion that from what they had seen, women
were capable of building a house. And the rest, as they
say, is history. This year, Loudon County women will
build their 10th Women Build house.

If you are interested in becoming involved with our
Women Build Program, call Sandi Byrd, resource
development director at 865-458-0704, Option 2, Ext 4
or email her at Sandra@loudoncountyhabitat.org.

The Loudon Habitat “electrical
crew” was also on hand that cold
morning in March when Altar’d
State began building their house.
In fact, they were right across the
street at the fourth house sponsored
by the Episcopal Church of the
Resurrection.

It might have been bitter cold, but
it was also time for the “electrical
crew” to do their magic. It just so
happens that one of the regulars in
this crew is Andrew Wilkinson who
belongs to this church and
has been a leader in their
previous builds.

For large donation pick-ups
call 865-488-7427 opt 1.

The Energizer Bunny Has Nothing On These Guys

These “electrical” guys too were
bundled up for the cold, but luckily
would be working inside, because
this house already had both walls
and roof! “They always come to the
construction site with a game plan
and for this day it was to get the
wiring done on 224 Hope Way.

The Episcopal Church of the
Resurrection has been sponsoring
houses for Loudon Habitat since
2010. Many know them because
they are the ones who put on the
RibFest 4Homes—an event that
once you’ve attended, you won’t
soon forget!!

This partnership and the loyal
members of this church have set
the example for other churches who
might think they don’t have enough
volunteers or enough interest to
raise the sponsorship funds.

This church has not only built
Habitat houses, but they’ve built
a community of caring, hard-
working individuals and they have
made a difference in the lives of
many including the families that
now own their own home thanks to
their generosity and initiative.

“it was very exciting to see the women come
out on the construction site. They are excited
about learning how to take care of their own
homes, as well as build homes for others. When
we did get started, we had close to 200 women
and it was so much fun.”

Sarah Reynolds, Habitat volunteer and
supporter since Loudon County Habitat was
begun in the early 1990’s.
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This church has not only built Habitat houses, but they’ve built a community of caring, hard-working individuals and they have made a difference in the lives of many including the families that now own their own home thanks to their generosity and initiative.
Day in and day out, in the cold, in the sweltering heat, and sometimes in the rain, we come out here and work together toward a common goal—to build decent homes with deserving families.”

Habitat volunteer

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